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DOVES AWAIT AID MEASURE

Senators Likely To Use Bill For Policy Amendments

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Washington — When Congress sent the draft bill to the White House last week, Senate doves lost what seemed to be an ideal vehicle for foreign policy amendments, but an even better one is on its way: foreign aid.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has the foreign aid bill bottled up for the moment because of a fight with the administration over information, but Senator J. William Fulbright (D., Ark.), the chairman, has said the panel will report out a bill eventually.

"Christmas Tree" Bill

When it does come out, however, the expectation is that there will be a number of "hookers" in it, possibly even an amendment to cut off funds for the war in Vietnam. In any case, committee sources acknowledge that the foreign aid bill will be a "Christmas tree," ornamented with amendments to affect foreign policy and to increase congressional influence in the field.

The administration considers the foreign aid bill vital, particularly the portions affecting Southeast Asia. The \$3.3 billion authorization bill contains \$565 million for Vietnam and \$201 million for Cambodia, Laos and Thailand in economic supporting assistance. It contains an additional \$200 million in military aid for Cambodia (military aid to Vietnam, Laos and Thailand is contained in the Defense budget.

But there is growing opposition to foreign aid in Congress and many members—including both liberals and conservatives—would not be adverse to seeing the entire program terminated. Thus the Senate—more loaded with foreign policy activists than the House—could present the House and the administra-

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take-it-or-leave-it basis.

The bill to extend the draft gave Senate liberals a similar, though weaker, strategic position.

At least 30 senators were willing to suspend the draft and to hold the bill as hostage for a strong anti-war national policy, including a nine-month deadline for total U.S. withdrawal from Indochina.

They held up the draft bill for 2½ months after the selective service law expired, but finally lost the fight in the face of intensive pressure put on by the administration, which asserted that the Senate was jeopardizing national security.

It is doubtful that the administration can exert as much pressure in behalf of foreign aid. President Nixon, himself, de-emphasized foreign aid when he included in his latest economic recovery package a 10 per cent cut in the program.

Public opinion polls have shown that this cut in foreign aid was the most popular of the steps taken by the President. Thus there is not likely to be any backlash from delaying action on a foreign aid bill.

Those contemplating ornaments for the foreign aid bill include the McGovern-Hatfield forces, who favor cutting off funds for the Vietnam war at a certain time, even though the Senate has already rejected the funds cut-off approach on several occasions.

Senator Mike Mansfield (D., Mont.), the majority leader, has said he intended to reintroduce an amendment to force a reduction in the U.S. troop level in Europe. He failed in his attempt to attach such a rider to the draft bill, but in view of the increasing deterioration of the U.S. economic position in the world, Mr. Mansfield has indicated he will try again.

While the majority leader is leaving his options open, the most obvious vehicle for a troop-cut amendment seems to be the foreign aid bill.

Besides the majority leader, Senator Fulbright, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, also has his irons in the fire.

For example, he will try in committee to amend the foreign aid bill to require annual authorization for the State Department budget as well as that for the United States Informa-

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tion Agency. At present only appropriations bills are needed annually for these agencies and such bills are outside the Foreign Relations Committee's jurisdiction.

Budget Approval

Mr. Fulbright has noted that one reason that the Armed Services Committees wield such influence with the Pentagon is that they must approve its budget annually.

The committee is also likely to tighten provisions in the foreign aid law that provides for an automatic funds cut-off if the executive branch refuses to provide certain information.

At present, the President can waive the requirement by simply stating his reasons for not providing the requested information.

Last month, Mr. Nixon withheld a five-year plan on military aid from the Foreign Relations Committee on the ground that it was a tentative internal document.

Other Provisions

There are numerous other provisions for presidential discretion that are likely to come under attack.

For example, the President can now shift up to 10 per cent of the funds in any one category of foreign aid to another, and he has special authority to use up to \$250 million to help a country that is "important to the security of the United States" and is "a victim of active Communist or Communist-supported aggression."

These provisions in the law, according to committee sources, allowed the administration to give military aid last year to Cambodia, deepening the U.S. commitment to the defense of Indochina without specific congressional authorization.

The committee is also expected to endorse the House action of cutting off military aid to Greece and Pakistan, but will probably remove the escape clause that allows continued aid to Greece if the President decides that the national security of the United States requires it.

Floating Around

Other foreign policy proposals are floating around Congress and could eventually find a home in the foreign aid bill. They include legislation to restrict the President's war-making powers, to require publication of the total CIA budget, to ban the CIA from engaging in military operations, to make CIA intelligence data available to Congress and to place a ceiling on U.S. expenditures in Laos.

While these proposals are not directly related to foreign aid, the Senate does not usually balk at attaching riders to bills simply because they are unrelated to the subject matter.